soon after the claims are decreed by the Tribunal. However, ex-gratia amounting to Rs. 22.90 lakhs has been paid to next of kin of the victims of the accident to take care of their immediate needs.

Stoppage to Motihari Muzaffarpur Intercity Express

1812. SHRI VI JAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the local population are demanding the stoppage of Motihari-Muzaffarpur Intercity Express at Kanti Railway Station in Bihar; and

(b) if so, when it is likely to be implemented and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) Some representations were received for provision of stoppage of trains at Kanti Railway station and these were examined. However, stoppage of additional trains at Kanti has not been found commercially viable, at present.

Purchase of Substandard Rail Tracks

†1813. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the news-item published at page 10 of the Rashtriya Sahara dated the 26th December, 2002 under the caption 'Aksar hydrogen ki adhik matra se tutati hain rail patriyan';

(b) whether it is also a fact that Railway Diploma Engineers' Association has also blamed for the purchase of low quality railway tracks;

(c) if so, the Government's reaction thereto; and

(d) what steps Government are taking to ensure that high quality tracks are purchased in future?

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Not to the knowledge of this Ministry.

(c) and (d) Rails, under traffic, some times get over-stressed and result into fracture. There are various reasons for over-stressing of rails. Excessive hydrogen content in rail steel is also one of the causes leading to rail fractures.

The permissible hydrogen content in rail has been reduced to 2ppm and is well comparable with world standards. The rails in Bhilai Steel Plant are being manufactured to this specification.

Water/Telephone lines under Rail Tracks

†1814. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals which are pending for laying telephone and water pipe lines under railway tracks in Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) by when the sanction/aproval would be granted to the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) There are 93 proposals in all, for laying telephone lines and water pipelines pending with the Railways in the State of Uttar Pradesh.

(b) Each proposal is individually examined and approval is accorded after due examination i.e. feasibility of the proposal etc. and observing of the formalities by the party i.e. deposit of due fees etc. Therefore, no target can be set for granting of approval to the pending proposals.

Track Renewal

1815. SHRI TARINIKANTA ROY:
SHRI JIBON ROY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many kilometres of track renewal have been completed during the last five years, year-wise:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.